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AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED ON THE CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION,

TO THE PEOPLE OF HOLLIS, N. H.

SEPTEMBER 15th, 1830.

BY THE

REV. GRANT POWERS,

OF GOSHEN, CONNECTICUT

DUNSTABLE, N. H.

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H. D. 8
September 15th, 1830.

REV. GRANT POWERS,

DEAR SIR—We herewith communicate to you a copy of the proceedings of a meeting of the citizens of Hollis, in relation to your Centennial Discourse. Be assured your kindness and labors upon this interesting occasion are duly appreciated, and will be long and gratefully remembered.

With sentiments of respect and esteem, we are, dear Sir,

your friends and obedient Servants,

BENJAMIN M. FARLEY, }
BENJAMIN POOL, } Committee.
JESSE WORCESTER, }

At a meeting of the citizens of Hollis, held at the Meeting House, September 15, 1830,
Chose

BENJAMIN M. FARLEY, Esq. *Chairman.*
EDWARD EMERSON, *Secretary.*

Voted, that BENJAMIN M. FARLEY, Esq., Hon. BENJAMIN POOL, and JESSE WORCESTER, Esq., be a Committee to present the thanks of this meeting to the Rev. GRANT POWERS, for his ingenious, elaborate and interesting discourse, this day delivered, and request of him a copy for the press.

E. EMERSON, *Secretary.*

GENTLEMEN,

As the organ of this town, you have honoured me with a request for a copy of my Address as a preliminary step to its appearing before the public from the press. I cheerfully leave it at your discretion, with no other apology, than barely to allude to the embarrassments, the author experienced from ill health, during the time, which was afforded him for the preparation.

With sentiments of esteem and high respect,

I subscribe yours,

GRANT POWERS.

BENJAMIN M. FARLEY, Esq., }
Hon. BENJAMIN POOL, } Committee
JESSE WORCESTER, Esq. } of the Town.

Hollis, Sept. 16th, 1830.



ADDRESS.

A wilderness of unmeasured extent is a sublime object. This world affords but one other of equal sublimity, it is an ocean untraversed. Each presents to the mind a boundless expanse, an infinitude of parts, a variety undescribed, including objects of terror and delight, of utility and harm.

In view of each, the contemplative mind must be impressed with its own limited powers, as when it surveys the heavens, and if it resists not the demand of nature's God, it will feel the inspirations of the Almighty, and in the admiring language of the Royal Worshipper exclaim, *Lord what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him ! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him.*

To every inhabitant of the Eastern Hemisphere in the 15th Century, the Atlantic Ocean presented an illimitable expanse, on the surface of which the adventurous thought could travel forever, without meeting with other bounds than those, which were created by a consciousness of its own incapacity to limit immensity ! Dark and unfathomable was its bed, and he was pronounced presumptuous, if not impious, who dared to raise the bold inquiry—on what does the setting sun dispense his rays ? And that must be a mental phenomenon, characterized

by the morally sublime, a sublimity commensurate with the greatness of the object in nature, which in such circumstances, proposed for itself to relinquish its hold on *terra firma*, and launch away, to explore the mysteries of the West. This phenomenon was exhibited by Christopher Columbus, a native of Genoa, in the year 1492, when he stepped from the soil of Spain upon the deck of a small and sea-worn ship, to traverse an unknown Ocean, and to explore the length and breadth of *Terra Incognita*. It seems to fall to the office of the imagination to conceive, rather than to the power of utterance to express, the solicitude of Columbus, amidst mutinies, and incessant labours and night-watching, from the 3d of August to the 11th of October, when the exclamation—Land! Land! was for the first time made in view of this newly discovered world! Proportionally with the previous fears and discontents of his crew, arose their transports of joy, on beholding a country so dissimilar to their own, yet enchantingly luxuriant and beautiful. They united in a hymn of praise to the Lord of the Universe, and falling on their knees before Columbus, confessed the wrongs they had committed.

This was, unquestionably, an enterprise at that time, without a parallel in the history of the world; whether we contemplate the boldness of the design, the fortitude and perseverance of the adventurer, or the results of his discoveries. And was it not for a single event, which occurred on the shore of New-England, one hundred and twenty eight years from the first voyage of Columbus, I should despair of exhibiting to your mental vision, a scene so grand, so inspiring, among human actions, as the discovery and possession of this Western Hemisphere by Columbus!

But as much as I admire the character and deeds of Columbus, I must think them both eclipsed by the little band of Pilgrims, which first consecrated the soil of Plymouth to the worship of the true God, and to civil and

religious liberty. Columbus was himself an experienced Navigator ; he had three small ships under his command ; ninety men, and ample provisions for a year. He sailed under the patronage of the sovereigns of Spain ; he could retrace his way at his pleasure, and if he was successful in his enterprise, he looked for rewards and honors to crown himself and his posterity ! Not so with the Plymouth Colony. They left their native country while it was frowning on their path. They fled from persecutions, and meditated no return ! And when the shores of England, the spires of their Churches, and the cloud-capped summits of their hills, retired successively from their view, they said, *Farewell England ; farewell, the Church of God in England ! and all Christian friends there.**

They could obtain no grant from the crown of England, nor the least assurance that they might enjoy either civil or religious liberty in the wilds of America ! They had one solitary crazy ship to waft them over the yet unfrequented Ocean of the West, and a treacherous Captain, who, for a bribe, landed them upon the inhospitable shore of Plymouth, late in the season, instead of bringing them, agreeably to his contract, to the more genial climate, and productive soil of New-York. Here were twenty four heads of families ; seventeen single men, and sixty children and domestics, making an aggregate of 101 persons. Their provisions were scanty, and injured by the salt water ; their clothing was insufficient for the rigours of a northern winter, and they were without a shelter from the storm ! And now I solicit those who are parents to take the place of our forefathers at this eventful moment. After a perilous and tardy voyage of more than two months, you discover land, but it is not Manhadoes, or New-York ; it is an unknown region at the north, and the cruel treachery of your Captain is no longer concealed. But here you must land, and encounter all the calamities of want and cold for a long and dreary winter.

*History of New-England.

I imagine that I see you stand on that lone, frail deck, viewing the appalling scene before you. A wilderness unmeasured, unbroken, more than fills all your vision.—The dense trees of the forest, whose tops tower on high, and cast their sombrous shade upon the deep, and through whose branches the storms of November howl tremendously, seem to challenge you as their invaders, and to defy your boldest thoughts ! The waves from the Main run high, and clash and break up these wild shores in sounds, which speak to your ears an eternal war of elements ! The sea fowls, perched upon the cliffs of the impending rocks, scream to their fellows, and strange sights of human form are seen, running from tree to tree, with revengeful aspect, and weapons of murderous import. The strangeness of the scene has brought your children on deck, and the shivering group around you say —“ Father, is this our home,” and are you still firm ? and with the presentiment that this shore is to become the tomb of nearly one half of your number the present winter, are you still firm ? Do I hear you say to these quaking innocents—“ Yes children, this is our *home*. Here we will live, and here die on freedom’s soil ! Here we will teach you to love and worship God agreeably to his word, and the dictate of your conscience ; and when we die, we will bequeath you the rights of men, and leave it in solemn charge, that you transmit them unimpaired to your posterity ?” Do I see and hear this ? Then the scene of our forefathers is mentally before me, when they stepped upon the Plymouth Rock, and I witness a moral heroism, which this world has exhibited but once, and the like it will never exhibit again ! an enterprise, which for principle, fortitude, and greatness of design, was never surpassed by human deed !

It would be gratifying to notice in this connexion the peculiarities in the history of this infant colony, and exhibit some of the tokens of Divine favour upon it during the first years of its existence ; but I am admonished that

time would fail me in doing more than barely to allude to some events, which will suggest the progress of our forefathers in the settlement of this Country, until the standard of culture and civilization was planted in this town, an event which is to come under distinct consideration at this time.

It appears, that notwithstanding the hardships and losses sustained by the Plymouth company during the first two years of their residence in the country, (and they had buried forty six of their number in less than four months from their landing in Plymouth) their simple continuance had inspired others in England with a resolution to plant themselves in America, and in little more than two years from the first possession of Plymouth in Dec. 22d, 1620, Edward and William Hilton from London, came over and established a settlement at Dover in this State, in the spring of 1623.*

In 1629, the Charter of Massachusetts Bay was granted, and Salem, Charlestown, Boston, Dorchester and other places, were planted with the tree of civil and religious liberty in rapid succession.† This same year John Wheelwright and others of Massachusetts, meditating a settlement in the neighbourhood of the Piscataqua River, assembled a council of the Indians at Exeter, and by purchase, obtained a Deed, signed by four Sagamores, of all the territory lying between the Rivers, Piscataqua and Merrimack, bounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the East ; on the South, by the Merrimack to Pautucket Falls, between Chelmsford and Dracut ; thence by a line N. W. twenty miles, passing through Litchfield, Hampshire, Dunstable and Merrimack, to Amherst plain ; thence by a line running N. E. to the Piscataqua River, passing through Amoskeag Falls on the Merrimack, Chester, Nottingham, Barrington, and Rochester ; Thence down the Piscataqua to the Ocean.‡

* Belknap's History of New-Hampshire.

† Morse's Geography.

‡ Belknap.

This contract, so amicably and honorably entered into, was scrupulously regarded by the Indians for the period of nearly fifty years, nor do I find a single murder committed by them, within these limits during all this time ; but the English were permitted to extend their plantations, and to cultivate their fields without fear or molestation ; and with the exception of a short, but exterminating war with the Pequots, a powerful tribe in the South East part of Connecticut, in the year 1637,* peace was maintained generally with the tribes in New-England. But it may deserve a passing remark in this place, that the New-Hampshire settlers were not at this period distinguished for their agricultural pursuits. Their principal attention was given to lumber, the fur trade, and to the fisheries. For ten years from the settlement of the Colony, their bread was brought from England in meal, or from Virginia in grain, and sent to a wind-mill in Boston, to be ground.†

But in 1675, the Colony of New-Hampshire, in common with the other Colonies of New-England, was aroused from her state of repose so long enjoyed, and she entered into the horrors of an Indian war, which continued three years.‡ This was denominated *Philip's war*, on account of a distinguished Chief of that name, who resided within the present limits of the State of Rhode-Island, and was thought to be the principal instigator of it. This sagacious Chief foresaw the total extinction of the Indians in New-England by the growing power of the English, unless a fatal blow was seasonably given to it ; and he conceived the bold design of giving it. The plan was conceived and matured in his own breast, and it included a union of all tribes in New-England, and some think of all in the United States, and in Canada, to make a simultaneous effort to exterminate the English, and reoccupy

* Marshall's Life of Washington.

† Belknap.

‡ History of New-England.

their grounds. The league was extensively formed ; and in such secrecy that the Colonies were unapprized of the gathering storm, until it burst upon them. Plymouth and Massachusetts Colonies were the first to feel the perfidy and fury of the Indians, but New-Hampshire soon drank of the same bitter cup, and the towns upon the banks of Piscataqua River were in constant terror. Men, women and children were murdered, and others hurried into captivity. Their houses were burned, and their flocks were destroyed. But Philip himself falling in the war he had waged, most of his tribe being annihilated, and the league being broken, peace was restored in 1678. But this season of tranquility continued no more than ten years.

In 1688, the Indians and French commenced hostilities on our Eastern frontier, and for the space of eleven years, the same tragic scenes were again exhibited, which were acted in the war of Philip ; Portsmouth and Dover suffering in a special degree.* Peace was declared in 1699, but hostilities were renewed in 1703, and were prosecuted with unrelenting severity another ten years. From 1713, to 1722, a tolerable degree of tranquility prevailed ; and then succeeded the memorable conflict of three years, denominated *Lovell's war*, on account of the brilliant achievements of Capt. John Lovell of Dunstable, N. H., who, in 1725, raised a volunteer company of 46, in his own town, penetrated to the Head-Quarters of the Indian settlements at Pigwacket, and fought the battle in which he fell ; but he fell so *mightily*, that he forever liberated that eastern section of our State from Indian invasion, and procured a peace.† Fifty years had now passed away from the commencement of Philip's war, twenty-seven of which were consumed in actual hostilities, and twenty-three in fearful forebodings. This state of things had greatly retarded the settlement of New-Hampshire, and in 1702, there were no more than 10,000 inhabitants in the

*New-Hampshire Gazetteer.

† Belknap. A 1

whole Province, seven incorporated towns, and four ordained Ministers.* But at the close of Lovell's war, with the prospect of a more durable peace, adventurers from Massachusetts and our own sea-coast, began to multiply and extend their settlements in the interior, and to this period are we to look for the settlement of this town.

Peter Powers, born at Littleton, Mass. 1707, and Anna Keyes, born at Chelmsford, Mass. 1708, being united in wedlock in 1728,† moved to Hampshire, Dunstable, the same year, three years after *Lovell's Fight*, while the infant settlement were yet mourning the loss of their distinguished Hero, and yet relating with melancholy satisfaction his deeds of valor to their listening children, during each long, and successive winter evening.

Mr. Powers, not considering himself permanently located in Dunstable, penetrated the forest of *Nissitissit*, now Hollis, in the fall of 1730, one hundred years ago, and fixed on this place as his future residence. He came with his family, his wife and two children, in January 1731, and pitched his tent in sight of this long consecrated spot, the vestiges of that first tent remaining still visible a little South West of the dwelling house of Thomas Cummings.

We may here pause and reflect for a moment on the condition of this pioneer family, and sympathize with them in their circumstances.

Mr. Powers was under the age of 23 years, and Anna, his wife less than 22 years. They had two infant children the objects of their love, and solicitude. We see them perched upon these snows untracked, except by the footsteps of savage men, or beasts of prey! They are secluded from the civilized world, in the bosom of a dense forest, and their nearest neighbor could not be visited in a less travelling distance than ten miles! The Nashua rolled its dark tide between them and their neighbor, and at two periods of the year only, when bound in fetters of ice, or in times of extreme drought, could they cross it, without availing themselves of the power and skill of an old, and well trained beast of the Narraganset blood, that at all

* New-Hampshire Gazetteer.

† Records of the town of Chelmsford, Mass.

times disdained its proud waters, and whose brawny limbs would cause it to boil like a seething pot, or caldron!— Thus secluded by all that is wild and grand in a deep forest, the solitude itself is impressive, and when it is occasionally broken by the scream of an eagle, the howl of a beast, or the yell of a savage, it becomes *awful*. Think, too, that this youthful pair were familiar with all the ferocious cruelties of an Indian war! Their ears had heard the melancholy story from those in the habiliments of mourning; and their eyes had seen the blood-stained hearth, and threshold, of the once peaceful and happy, but now deserted dwelling. We must suppose them possessed of the reflection, that if upon any pretence, hostilities were renewed, they must stand the first in sacrifice, and none would remain to record the tragic scene! And in such circumstances, would not the horrid spectres of death in all their terrifying forms, pass in vision before them, at lying down and rising up, in the house and in the field? Ah, happy are their sons, (I would they knew *how* happy,) who have entered into their labours; and happy are their daughters, who dwell securely!

In the summer of 1732, Eleazer Flagg came into this town, and located himself in the South West part of it, on or near the place now owned and improved by his descendant, Capt. Reuben Flagg. The house of Mr. Flagg was subsequently improved as a guard house, and was fortified against an attack from the Indians. The same season 1732, March 9th, Anna powers was born to Peter and Anna Powers, and was the first English child born in the town. She married Benj. Hopkins, Esq. of Milford, N. H, and died at an advanced age. Thomas Dinsmore, who was the third family in the settlement, came in and located himself on the place now owned and occupied by Amos Eastman, Esq. and in 1736, the little colony was augmented to the number of nine families. From 1731 to 1739, we have nothing special in the history of the infant settlement to record, unless we were to relate some of the adventures of individuals, which would illustrate in an eminent degree, the bold and enterprizing spirit of our fathers and mothers, and grand parents, from whose lips

we have received them ; and although they would amuse and instruct, and in some cases, excite our admiration, yet on *this* occasion, they must give place to the more grave, and important events. I have not been able to learn from any authentic source, whether this settlement suffered in common with other parts of New-England, from that desolating scourge denominated the *Throat Distemper*, which first appeared in Kingston, in May 1735, and swept through the colonies, as the angel of Death passed through Egypt. But I infer from the silence of our fathers upon this subject, that the blood of the passover was seen upon the side posts of their doors, and that it became their defence from the Destroyer. This Epidemic was so malignant in its character, and remaining without a parallel in this country for its mortality, it deserves a brief notice in this place. Of the first 40, who were seized by it in Kingston, not one survived ; and in 14 months, that small town had buried 113. Durham had buried 100.—Exeter 127 ; Dover 88 ; Portsmouth 99. On the East side of the Piscataqua River, in Kittery 122 ; and at Hampton-Falls 210. In the last named town, 20 families buried all their children. 27 persons were buried out of five families, and more than one sixth part of the whole population died. New-Hampshire lost by this visitation 1000 persons, 900 of whom were under 20 years of age.* And when we consider that at this period the Colony had but 15 towns, we shall see nearly every family clad in mourning ; all countenances sad, and all eyes red with weeping ! It may be said in the solemn style of holy writ—In New-Hampshire was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping and great mourning ; mothers weeping for their children, and *would not* be comforted, because they *were not*. But New-Hampshire was not made the solitary example of the divine displeasure.† In Byfield, Mass. 104 were numbered with the dead. One family buried eight children, four of whom were laid in the same grave in one dreadful moment. At Boston 114 died, and 4000 were sick with the disease. It extended its

* Belknap.

† History of New-England.

ravages as far South as the Carolinas, but in no place was it so destructive of life as in *this* Colony.*

From 1739, we begin to avail ourselves of the Records of this settlement. Hollis was originally included in the Grant of Old Dunstable, and belonged to Massachusetts as was supposed. The number of settlers at this time, amounting to about 20, they petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts, to be made a Parish, or Precinct, to enable them in a corporate capacity, to regulate their own ecclesiastical concerns. Accordingly, a grant was obtained, bearing date Dec. 28, 1739, which constituted the Territory, lying between the Nashua and Souhegan Rivers, on the South and North, and six miles East from the line, which divides between Pepperell and Townsend, a Parish, to be known by the name of *West Precinct*, in Dunstable.† The first Parish meeting was legally warned and holden on the 22d of January 1740, at the house of Lieut. Benjamin Farley, Inn-Keeper, situated about 60 rods West of the present dwelling of Dr. William Hale.

At this meeting Abraham Taylor was chosen Moderator and Clerk ; and Abraham Taylor, Peter Powers and Benjamin Farley, were chosen Assessors and Prudential Committee of the Parish. On the 16th of Dec. of this year, 1740, the Society at a legal meeting, voted to erect a meeting-house, on Abraham Taylor's land, about 60 rods Southerly from his dwelling-house, and to lay out a burying ground adjoining, one acre of land being a Deed of gift from the said Taylor to said Society. Mr. Taylor, who appears a prominent character in these incipient stages of the Precinct, and who was its first Benefactor, came into the settlement at an early period ; and is supposed to have been the 4th or 5th location in the town. The vestiges of his residence may still be seen about 60 rods North-erly from the place which we now occupy. In 1741, a meeting-house was erected on *this* spot, and the ground has ever since been improved for sacred purposes.‡ This

* Weekly News Letter, published at Boston, April 29, 1736.

† Records of the town of Hollis.

‡ The tradition of the town, which says, that the first meeting-house was built *near* the place where the present house stands is incorrect, as the Records of the town will show.—When the 2d house was to be erected, the 1st was removed a little to the East, and many of our fathers, who can remember that first house, after its removal, supposed it had always stood there, but it was not so. It originally stood where this now stands.

was the year in which the boundary line between Massachusetts and New-Hampshire, which had been a prolific source of contention for ten years, was defined and established, and this part of Old Dunstable fell within the limits of New-Hampshire.* Our fathers improved the first opportunity to petition the General Court of New-Hampshire for an act of incorporation, making them a town, and their petition was granted by an act bearing date April 20th, 1746. At the same time a town, called Monson, was created with corporate powers, composed of parts of the several towns now called Amherst, Milford and Hollis. The South line of Monson came half way from the corner school house on the North, towards the residence of Thomas Patch.

But prior to this the Rev. Daniel Emerson, born at Reading, Mass. May 20th, 1716, and graduated at Harvard College 1739, had received a call to take the Pastoral charge of the Church and Congregation in this place, and complying with the wishes of the infant Church and Society, he received ordination April 20, 1743. The thirtieth family, Jonathan Lovejoy, moved into the town the day of the ordination.

The first sermon, delivered to this people by that eminent servant of Christ, was preached from Acts 10, 29.—*Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for. I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me.*

On the 5th of June following Mr. Emerson's ordination, this Church celebrated the Lord's supper for the first time. It was a season peculiarly solemn and interesting in itself, and was rendered far more so, by an affecting instance of mortality with one of their own number! Mr. Abraham Taylor, who had been an efficient helper in providing a house of worship, whose name holds a prominent place in all the offices of the Society, and who had been instrumental in introducing Mr. Emerson into this town, departed this life on Friday preceding the 5th of June, and was buried on the day of the communion, thus exchanging the anticipated communion on earth, for one more pure, and exalted in the Kingdom of the Redeemer.†

* Belknap.

† He gave the land for the burying ground and was the first man buried in it.

In 1744, Mr. Emerson married Hannah, the daughter of Rev. Joseph Emerson of Malden, Mass. and the same year was rendered memorable by a renewal of hostilities between France and England, which was a sure precursor of war in America between the French and Indians on the one hand, and the English Colonies on the other.—This war continued with a little abatement about fifteen years in America, and has been long denominated the *Old French War*, to distinguish it from preceding wars, and the war of the Revolution, which succeeded it. In 1745, we find a vote of this town to rebuild a place for worship on the spot where we now stand, but as Jerusalem was rebuilt in troublous times, so was the second house for God's worship to be erected in this place, for with great semblance of truth may it be said, "every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand, held a weapon."

In 1746, the French and Indians assaulted the settlements and forts at Hinsdale and No. 4, now Charleston, in this State, and killed some and carried others into captivity. The settlements at Boscawen and Concord suffered in like manner, and so alarming was the prospect to the inhabitants of this town, that we find a public expression of their fearful apprehensions, dated May 20th, 1746. "Voted to petition the General Court of Massachusetts Bay for some soldiers for a Guard for us, being in great danger of the enemy"!* We will give a moment's consideration to this document. It teaches us, that but 84 years ago this present season, the inhabitants of this town were calling for aid of a neighboring State to protect them from the vengeful arm of a Savage foe! And when we reflect, that not an individual in the town, under 60 years of age, has ever had a rational thought of meeting an Indian invader at his threshold, we exclaim—*What hath God wrought!*

In 1749, a treaty of peace was ratified between France and England, which suspended hostilities between them in Europe about five years, but this did not so readily allay the jealousies and animosities of the Indians in Amer-

* Town Records.

ica, and it was believed in the Colonies, that the French in Canada, apprehending that war would soon break out again between their mother country and England, were secretly using their influence to prevent a reconciliation between the Indians and the English Colonies in America. Accordingly Charlestown was assaulted by the Indians after peace was known to exist in Europe ; Canterbury suffered some loss in 1752, and John Stark, who was Brigadier General in the Army of the United States in the war of the Revolution, was taken captive with one other* while hunting on Baker's river, by a party of the St. Francis Tribe, and was carried into Canada to the headquarters of that Tribe.† These facts will show what apprehensions must have prevailed with our ancestors, even, while they were said to be at peace. But in 1754, the anticipated war was renewed in Europe, and the contest was formally revived in America. In 1755, the New-Hampshire troops were called upon to aid in the capture of Ticondaroga and Crown Point, and a number of Hollis men went on that expedition. It was at this time Peter Powers received his Commission of Captaincy under Col. Blanchard. It is given *under the Hand and Seal at Arms, at Portsmouth, the 5th of June, in the 28th year of the Reign of His Majesty, King George the Second, Anno Domini, 1755*—signed Benning Wentworth, as Governor of his Majesty's Province of New-Hampshire. Benjamin Abbot was commissioned his Lieutenant. In 1755, the Rev. Mr. Emerson went out as Chaplain to Crown Point,‡ but how long he was absent from his Charge in this town, I have not been able to determine.

But the fall of Quebec into the hands of the English in 1759, and the consequent surrender of all the French possessions in Canada, in 1760, brought again the prospect of a settled tranquility in these Northern Colonies, and it was inexpressibly cheering to those who had so long borne the burden and heat of the day. For 15 long years the father had not cultivated his field in safety, nor had the mother committed her infant charge to rest, but with the most distressing apprehensions. And many of us can

* Lieut. Amos Eastman, who died at Hollis, March 6, 1808, in his 89th year.

† Belknap.

‡ Town Records.

remember with what ardor the veterans of that day would relate the achievements and successes of that war, even in old age, and when the thrillings of Patriotism seemed to threaten an immediate dissolution of their tremulous frames ! But notwithstanding these trials and losses New Hampshire was increasing in number and in wealth.— From 1702 to 1749, her population had risen from ten to thirty thousand ; and from 1749 to 1760, they had increased to thirty-four thousand.* And in Hollis in 1760, there were 120 taxable persons.† Every thing was now animating to the view of the Colonies. They were exempt from fear of a lurking enemy ; their hardships had rendered them bold and enterprising ! In marching to and from the theatre of war, they had become acquainted with the fertile parts of the interior of their country, and our young men pressed back with ardor to take possession of the wilderness, and to convert it into a fruitful field ! The Government of New Hampshire complied with their utmost wishes in this respect, and in 1761, not less than 78 towns were surveyed, and their limits established in the Connecticut valley. But in 1763, their bright visions of peace and prosperity were suddenly overcast. The New Hampshire Gazette of May 27, which contained the definitive treaty of peace between England and France, contained, also, the intentions of the British Ministry to quarter troops in America, and tax the people without their consent, for their support !‡ The Colonies at once understood the purport of this intelligence. It was to *subjugate* them, and to make them vassals of the British Crown ! It was no new idea ; It had been virtually argued and contested in a war of words, for nearly one century. But little did these Colonies think that this subject would be revived at such a moment as this. They had contributed all their aid to the British nation during that long and distressing war. They had expended their best blood and treasure, and by their hearty co-operation, they had contributed to put the British nation in possession of a territory, full twice the dimensions of all their possessions in

* Marshall, and N. H. Gazetteer. † Town Records.

‡ New Hampshire Gazetteer, and Belknap.

Europe! And were they to be requited thus? Must they, weary and exhausted, and panting for repose, burnish their arms anew, and gird them on, single handed, against their Mother Country, the most powerful nation in the world, or resign to her oppressive grasp their liberties, and their lives? Alas, this was their dilemma!—And never was there a more affecting exhibition of the Scripture truth, that a *Mother may forget her sucking child*! And, my hearers, I feel a deep sympathy with our Fathers, the living and the dead, who by a mysterious Providence, were brought to realize a scene like that!—And I feel grateful to their memories, when I reflect that they did not sell us, but preferred death to the inthrallment of their Sons and Daughters! Oh, it is an honor to be the descendants of such men and women! Let us embalm their memories in our choicest feelings! But although the parts, which both England and America were to perform in case of extremity, were, doubtless, already determined upon by them respectively, yet neither of them were prepared to enter the contest without a breathing time. Twelve years passed away in strifes and melancholy forebodings. Every day the storm gathered blackness. The elements above were greatly agitated; the caverns beneath bellowed, and gave portentous signs that nature travailed to bring forth death! An extract from a private letter of Governor Wentworth to a friend in England will serve to illustrate the state of feeling in New-Hampshire at that time. He says—“Our hemisphere threatens a hurricane. I have in vain strove, almost to death, to prevent it. If I can, at last, bring out of it, safety to my country and honor to our Sovereign, my labors will be joyful. My heart is devoted to it, and you know its sincerity.”*

But while things were preparing for momentous results, Hollis sustained some changes which should receive a brief notice in this place. In 1767, that part of Hollis, lying East of Muddy Brook, Flint's Pond, and Flint's Brook, was taken from Dunstable and annexed to this town. In 1769, the town of Raby, now Brookline, was

* Belknap in Note.

taken mostly from Hollis, and received an act of incorporation. In 1770, the town of Monson, which has been described, was divided, and a part was annexed to Amherst, and a part to Hollis. Three years subsequently to this, the farms lying East of the Nashua, and now owned by Messrs. Marshall, Read and Rumlens, were annexed to Hollis.* In 1771, New Hampshire was organized into five Counties, Rockingham, Strafford, Hillsborough, Cheshire and Grafton, which received their names after the particular friends of the Governor in England. But 110 Courts were held until 1773.†

The time now drew near for the storm, which had been so long gathering, to burst upon the Colonies in America. And in 1775, when the News came that General Gage was marching British troops from Boston into the interior, New Hampshire was electrified! She took up arms and flew to the assistance of her Brethren! Twelve hundred of her sons instantly repaired to Charlestown and Cambridge, and seventy of them were contributed by Hollis. These marched under the command of Capt. Reuben Dow, a distinguished Patriot of the Revolution, whose love of Country and hatred of Tyranny became extinct only with the extinction of life. John Goss was his Lieutenant, and John Cummings was his Ensign. These were the very men, who helped compose the Provincial troops at Bunker Hill, on the ever memorable 17th of June, and who at the command of the brave John Stark of New Hampshire, and Col. William Prescott of Mass. twice shivered the British Phalanks to atoms, as they attempted to invade their feeble redoubt!‡ Capt. Dow left seven of his men dead on the field of action, viz—Nathan Blood, Jacob Boynton, Isaac Hobart, Phineas Nevins, Peter Poor, Thomas Wheat, and Ebenezer Youngman. Six were wounded, among whom was the Captain himself, and he bore with him through life a painful memento of British violence. Caleb Eastman, of Hollis, lost his life on the 2nd day after the Battle on Charleston heights, by the accidental discharge of a gun while on the parade. In December of 1775, Capt. Noah Worcester marched at

* Town Records. † Belknap. ‡ Marshall and Belknap.

the head of a company, about thirty of whom were Hollis men. Early in 1776, the State raised 2000 troops and sent them in three Regiments to New York, to be at the disposal of General Washington.* A goodly number of these were Hollis men. These under the Command of Brigadier General Sullivan, were ordered up the Hudson and down the Lakes into Canada, where they fell in with the infection of the Small pox, this being aggravated by a dysentery and a putrid fever, after they had retreated to Ticondaroga, it is computed that nearly one third of the New Hampshire Regiments died in this Campaign.† But how many of the troops from Hollis fell a sacrifice to these maladies we are not informed. In July of this same year, Capt. Daniel Emerson marched at the head of a company to Ticondaroga; about half of his company were Hollis men; and in August Capt. William Reed marched with a company to New-York, more than 20 of his men belonged to this town. In providing for the Campaign of 1777, and for the future exigences of the war, Congress proposed to raise 88 Battalions with enlistments for three years, or during the war, and that they should be apportioned to the ability of the respective States. It fell to New-Hampshire to raise three Battalions,‡ and to Hollis thirty men. This requisition was promptly complied with by this town, and they furnished thirty men annually until the close, or nearly the close of the war. Nor was this all; there were repeated emergences, which called for more aid, and these calls were considered imperious and sacred; and were met accordingly. Says a respected friend in a recent communication to me, to whom I am indebted for many important facts exhibited in this address. “Our quota of men for three years, or during the war, was thirty. And besides furnishing these and keeping their places good; we were frequently called on for more, as I recollect to have gone three times myself, after the three years men marched, besides being at Ticondaroga in 1776, when fifteen years of age.”§ In 1777, Capt. John Goss marched to Bennington with a company, and about 30 of his men were from

* Town Records. † Belknap.

† Marshall.

§ Jesse Worcester, Esq.

Hollis. New-Hampshire men, when they had arrived in camp were ordinarily embodied in the same Regiment, or Regiments, and their valor became proverbial. They were known by the name of "Stark's men," "Sullivan's men," and "Scammel's men." They were at Bunker-Hill, Bennington, Still-water, Saratoga, Germantown, Rhode-Island, and York-town. And whatever is inspiring in the events which have characterized those places in the American history—Hollis may justly consider herself as having contributed her full share to render these events resplendent and immortal ! From the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown in the Autumn of 1781, active warfare between England and America terminated, but the regular troops were retained in camp until the treaty of peace was ratified in Sept. of 1783 ; when we were acknowledged by the Crown of England, an Independent nation, and the war-worn soldier, who had survived the perils of his Country, returned to enjoy the repose his valor had purchased, in the embrace of friends, and to live in the grateful recollection of succeeding generations.

New-Hampshire furnished during this war about 14,000 men, of whom Hollis afforded not less than 250. Of the 14,000 from this State, 4,000 died, either in battle, or by sickness ;* and of this number, Hollis sustained a share of 30. And in view of the facts thus exhibited, I am happy in the occasion, which allows me, while standing at the distance of nearly fifty years from the termination of this cruel war and while my eyes are permitted to behold the sparse remains of that generation, who inspired the world with admiration, to declare in the ears of their descendants, that their fathers were *Patriots* ! Not in words only ; not mere Mushroom defenders of their country, prating and blustering in security ; but they were Patriots in evil times ! They had counted the cost of this struggle, and were prepared to give and receive hard blows ! and when in the field, they were David's men ; they were "men of might, and of war fit for the hattle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains."—

* N. H. Gazetteer.

Think for one moment. This town contained at that period considerable less than the present number of its population. The ground was comparatively unsubdued.—The facilities for subduing it not half so great as at present. Commerce being annihilated, and our sea ports blockaded by the fleets of the enemy, there was little market for a chance surplus of produce. There was scarcely a shilling in circulation, which would pass for its nominal value, and no one could set limits to its depreciation ! Fields and farms were left unimproved by those in the service of their country, and others yielded but a stinted harvest, by reason of the interruptions, which husbandry sustained from frequent calls for minute men and volunteers to take the field in cases of emergency ! In the midst of these burdens and hardships, the small pox broke out in the town in 1779, supposed to be communicated by the enemy of our Country, and two houses were improved for hospitals, one of which was subsequently owned and occupied by Lemuel Wright, and the other by James Rideout ; in the latter of which, there were more than 100 patients at one time. About 150 received inoculation, three of whom died ; and five others who took the infection by exposure died also. To these trials, we must add the frequent intelligence, that such of their neighbours had fallen in battle, or died by disease in the camp, and the people of the town must assemble, and appoint others to fill their places in the ranks of the army ! Family after family was added to the list of mourners, and when fathers and mothers saw their sons, obedient to the call of their country, gird themselves with the panoply of war, and set out for the field of action, they said, “farewell.” And when they looked after them until vision failed, they again repeated “farewell our son !” These were the days which tried men’s souls ! But our fathers did not faint ; and I love to repeat it—They were *Patriots* ! I would proclaim it over their ashes ! I would inscribe it upon their tomb-stones, that generations to come, may learn the price of their freedom, and be excited to emulate the deeds of their ancestors !

From the termination of the war, which secured us freedom and Independence the civil history of this town is not characterized by any number of incidents of an extraordinary feature. I will remark, however, that in 1790, about one mile in width was taken from the west side of Hollis, and annexed to Brookline, and in 1794, the town of Milford was incorporated, taking a portion from Hollis on the North West, and from that period to the present, the limits of this town have remained unaltered.* In 1793, the Rev. Mr. Emerson, who had been the Pastor of this Church and Congregation fifty years, and who had arrived to the age of 77, became anxious, as he felt the infirmities of age increasing upon him, to see his successor in the sacred office, stand up in his place, and minister unto the flock, that at his death, the people might not be as sheep, which have no Shepherd. That so desirable an object might the more readily be obtained, he relinquished one half of his annual salary, and cordially received into his desk, the candidate of the people's choice. At this time, the Rev. Eli Smith, born at Belchertown Sept. 1759, and graduated at Brown University in 1792, having received a call from this Church and people to take the charge of their Spiritual concerns as Colleague Pastor with Mr. Emerson, was ordained on the 27th of Nov. 1793; The office of delivering the charge to the Pastor elect on that solemn and interesting occasion was assigned to Mr. Emerson by the ordaining Council, which office he performed with great sensibility, and in the most affectionate manner!† From this time Mr. Emerson filled up the remnant of his days in a retired, devotional frame of mind, evidently enjoying the blessedness of that Gospel, which he had preached to others, and came to the grave in peace, Sept. 30, 1801, "in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh, in his season," aged 85 years, having sustained his Pastoral relation with this Church and people somewhat more than 58 years, and survived all but one who constituted his original Charge.‡ His Consort lived to the advanced age of 90 years, and departed this life Feb.

* Town Records.

† A. A. Nicholas French. ‡ Mass. Missionary Magazine, June 1803.

28, 1812. In regard to this sainted woman I need only repeat the laconic eulogy of holy writ upon the demise of all the eminently godly in Christ—*The memory of the just is blessed.* Mr. Emerson was an Evangelical Minister of Christ. He preached the distinguishing doctrines of grace, and he was rendered the honoured instrument of turning many to righteousness, who will, we doubt not, become the seal of his ministry, and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. Mr. and Mrs. Emerson were blessed with a numerous family. They had thirteen children, two of whom were graduated at Harvard College, and about 20 of their descendants have either graduated, been members of Colleges, or are now members. Dea. Daniel Emerson, whose memory lives, I trust in the recollection of you all, was born Dec. 15, 1746, and spent his days in the place of his nativity, in the pursuits of husbandry and merchandize. He was not distinguished for a vivid imagination, or the brilliancy of his intellectual powers; but he was a “good man”! He was sober and discreet, and of excellent judgment. His habits of industry and economy afforded an example, that was a blessing to the town.

He sustained the office of Magistrate in this town many years; was repeatedly chosen to represent this town in the Legislature of the State, and at different periods was a member of the two higher branches of the State Government, a Senator and Counsellor. He became a member of this Church at an early age, and sustained the office of Deacon for many years. At his death which occurred Oct. 4, 1820, he was an efficient member of the Bible Society of this State, and sustained a very responsible office in it. *His*, also, was a Ministerial family. Three of his sons were graduates and entered the Ministry, and two of his daughters married Ministers. The Rev. Mr. Smith who has been your Pastor already 37 years, married Ama Emerson, the eldest daughter of Deacon Daniel Emerson, May 7th, 1794. She was born August 20, 1769. Hannah Emerson married the Rev. Nathaniel Hall of Granville, N. Y. Thus we see how God keepeth covenant with his servants, and we hope it will endure *to a thousand generations.*

Capt. Peter Powers, who we have seen, was the first settler in the town, died of a malignant fever, August 27th, 1757, aged 50 years. Anna Powers, his widow died Sept. 21, 1798, aged 90. Peter Powers, their eldest son, born at Dunstable, N. H, Nov. 29, 1728, graduated at Cambridge College 1758, and was a devoted Minister of the Gospel more than 40 years. He died at Deer Island in the year 1800, aged 72. The widow Hunt, who was the wife of Eleazer Flagg in her first marriage, and who was the second family in the town, died at the advanced age of 95. Abraham Taylor, who, as we have seen, was another of the first adventurers, died at an early period of the settlement. The daughter of Mr. Taylor married Noah Worcester, Esq. whose memory is with us to-day, as one of the fathers of the town for a long series of years. He had an active and vigorous mind, was one of the framers of the Constitution of this State, sustained the office of Magistrate more than 40 years, and was a member of this Church more than 60 years. Mr. Worcester and wife had seven children born to them, and of their posterity 18 have either received the honors of College, or are now members of New-England Colleges.—Eight are, or have been, Ministers of the Gospel, and one an author of celebrity. And may I not be indulged in the reminiscence of one in this descent to whom the speaker is indebted for the first thought of a scientific course; whose powers of intellect were of the very first order, and whose manly virtues and sincerity in friendship, endeared him to all of a kindred spirit. Jesse Worcester, Jun., was a rare youth. Conscious of his own powers, he aimed at great and noble ends; and as the eagle of a longer wing, and a stronger muscle than his fellows, soars away towards heaven unconscious of the danger of travelling in unsubstantial ether until he falls a victim to his own adventurous flight, so fell this youth in the ardor of literary pursuit. His bodily system was inadequate to sustain the intense operations of his intellectual powers, and he fell a sacrifice to his own mighty mind. Over his remains Genius wept for a favorite son, and the world sustained a loss of which she was unconscious.

It would be peculiarly gratifying to me thus to trace the origin and progress of families in this town to much greater length, and exhibit the Noyeses, the Cummingses, the Boyntons, Farleys, Pools, Jewetts, Hales, Conants, Nevinses, Dows, Eastmans, Tenneys, and Burges, all worthies of former days ; but time would fail me altogether, and I must hasten to notice some distinguishing displays of divine mercy and grace exhibited upon this Church.

It has been said, that Mr. Emerson was a successful Preacher of the Gospel. In proof of this, I would have you bear in mind the small beginnings of this Church.—There were but 29 families in the town at the organization of the Church, how many were members of it at that time, the records of the Church do not show, but the number must have been small. In 1745, two years after his settlement, the number of males were eleven.* We are to consider, that the ordinary progress of dissolution among Church members, during a period of fifty years, must have removed very many ; very many removed their relations to other Churches, as settlements advanced to the West, and in the latter part of the half Century, many more would take letters of dismission, than would bring letters from other Churches, and yet there were about 200 members in this Church, at the settlement of Mr. Smith in 1793. From 1793 to 1800 inclusive, more than one hundred had made a profession of religion. For four years from 1795, the still small voice of the Spirit was heard, and some from every class of society submitted joyfully to his reign.

In August of 1801, some special attention was again visible. The Pastor and his Church, were greatly animated, and with trimmed lamps, they went out to receive the blessing of the Bridegroom ; and when he came in the chariot of his power, his blessings exceeded all their anticipations ! Within the space of twelve months, every part of the town was visited with the convincing, renewing, and sanctifying influence of the Comforter. Nearly every cavilling voice was either changed into that of love and admiring gratitude, or was hushed in wonder and astonishment ! Oh, who can recall those seasons, even at

* Church Records.

this distance of time, without feeling something of that awful stillness and solemnity pervading him, which he then felt, as he approached the sanctuary, or the conference room ! Who can forget the love which animated so many Christian hearts, inspired their prayers, and enabled them to realize, that they were all members of one body ! How grateful to their ears was the sound of the footsteps of their beloved Pastor upon the threshold of the school-house, or of the Sanctuary, and with what readiness of heart did they receive his instructions ! This was a Pentecostal season, and the Church was seen coming up out of the wilderness, leaning upon the arm of her beloved. And my Christian friends, when we recall these things, can we not adopt the plaintive, yet emphatic language of pious Job—" Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me ; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light, I walked through darkness." ! The fruits of this revival, which continued to the Autumn of 1802, were 142, who made a profession of religion, and united with this Church, a greater part of whom were heads of families ; about thirty more entertained a hope, that they had passed from death unto life, but who in May 10, 1803, had not made a profession of religion.* At several subsequent periods, this town has experienced refreshing showers of divine grace, and by a communication from the Reverend Mr. Smith, bearing date Aug. 24, 1830, I am informed, that about 450, have professed to have experienced religion during his Ministry. About 420 have united with this Church, and some remain without, but give evidence of piety. This is a greater increase than is imparted to most Churches, and so far as they have walked worthily they are the best Epistle of commendation of him, who has administered to them in holy things. There are now four males and fifteen females, members of the Church, who were members in 1793.

In the summer of 1804, the present meeting house was erected on the spot, which had been consecrated to that use in fear and much trembling by our ancestors so early as 1741 ; and here I hope and trust, the Lord, the Most

* Mass. Miss. Magazine, June 1803.

High God, has condescended to record his name, and that it will be said of this house in the great day of accounts, "This man and that man was born there."

In regard to the healthfulness of this town, I have a few statistics, which may be interesting. From 1793 to 1818, a period of 25 years, there were 567 deaths.*— From 1822, to 1830, there were 169. The aggregate of which is for thirty three years, 736. The number of inhabitants in this town has not varied much from 1550, for thirty years, and this will show that one in 70, dies annually, and that the average number of deaths is a fraction more than 22, annually. There has been an estimate, that one in nine persons has lived to 80 years of age. I have not been able to exhibit the number of marriages, births or baptisms in any given period of time, as the Records both of the town and Church are deficient in these respects. There have been two persons belonging to this town, who attained to the advanced age of 104 years; Mrs. Elizabeth French, who died in 1749, and Mrs. Ulrick, who died in 1789. Three have attained to 95; and six to between 90 and 95. There are two individuals now living, who are the remains of a former generation, and stand like some ancient forest tree in an open field, to mark the spot where thousands of their cotemporaries fell. Capt. Caleb Farley, will have attained 100 years, when a kind Providence has added 45 days to his already protracted, but vigorous life! Mrs. Elizabeth Hale will have lived 98 years, should she reach the goal on the 17th of Feb. 1831. May the termination of life with each of them be peace, and the reward of a valuable life be glorious. There are now 70 persons over 70 years of age in this town, and 27 of these are over 80 years. Hollis has sustained the loss of 31 persons out of the ordinary course of nature. Four have died by violence. Israel Wilkins was killed by his son in a paroxism of anger in 1771.— Grant Powers, son of Francis Powers, was murdered at Crown Point, during the Revolutionary War. And Mrs. Hannah Kendrick and her daughter Hannah, were killed by John P. Kendrick in a fit of derangement, May 22,

* Farmer's Gazetteer of New-Hampshire.

1805. He was the only surviving son of Mrs. Kendrick, and only brother of his sister Hannah. He died in June 1805, and was deposited by the side of those, who had fallen victims to his insanity. Five persons have committed suicide, all of whom, I believe, were labouring under a partial derangement. Two have been killed by lightning ! Four by the fall of trees ; two by freezing ; seven by drowning ; three by falling from a horse ; one by falling under a sled ; one by a wagon-wheel passing over him ; and two by guns. Lieut. Ralph Emerson was killed by the accidental discharge of a cannon on the parade in front of this house, and Benjamin Hudson by the bursting of a gun. Fourteen houses have been consumed by fire, one of them, Mr. Ebenezer Jewett's, was destroyed by lightning whilst the inmates of the dwelling were preserved, apparently, by a miracle.

Thus it appears, that the inhabitants of this town have not been exempt from the calamities, which are incident to this mortal state ; but in some important respects, they have been signally blessed. You have ever enjoyed an Evangelical Ministry. You have buried but one Pastor in 87 years, the whole period of the Gospel ministry with you ; and to the present time, you have had your second Minister. You have in this time reared and settled 26 Ministers, viz : Peter Powers, Josiah Goodhue, Henry Cummings, Noah Worcester, Leonard Worcester, Thomas Worcester, Samuel Worcester, Joseph Emerson, Daniel Emerson, Ralph Emerson, Samuel Ambrose, Joseph Wheat, Abel Farley, Stephen Farley, David Smith, Mighill Blood, Caleb J. Tenney, David Jewett, Eli Smith, Fifield Holt, Grant Powers, Daniel Kendrick, Solomon Hardy, William P. Kendrick, Eli Sawtel and Jacob Hardy. You have, or have had, four licentiate preachers not ordained, Joseph Emerson, Josiah Burge, Leonard Jewett and Taylor G. Worcester, in all—**THIRTY** Preachers of the Gospel, and thirteen of your daughters have married Clergymen. You have had seven Graduates, who have not entered as yet either of the learned Professions. Joseph E. Worcester, who has become an author of celebrity, Jonathan Eastman, John

Proctor, Henry A. Worcester, Benjamin Emerson, Joseph Emerson, and Samuel T. Worcester. You have four who are now members of College. Benj. F. Farley, Frederick A. Worcester, Henry Sanderson and David Worcester. You have raised eight Counsellors, and Attorneys at Law. Benjamin M. Farley, George F. Farley, Nehemiah Hardy, William Tenney, Luke Eastman, Abel Conant, Luther Smith and Jonathan Sanderson.—Eleven of your sons have become Physicians—Abijah Wright, Peter Emerson, Samuel Emerson, William Hale, Jonathan Hale, Benjamin Burge, Luther Farley, Joseph F. Eastman, Noah Hardy, Joseph Boynton and Luke Lawrence. Fifteen have sustained the office of Deacon in this Church—William Cummings, Thomas Patch, Francis Worcester, Enoch Noyes, John Boynton, Stephen Jewett, Daniel Emerson, Josiah Conant, Abel Conant, Ephraim Burge, Stephen Jewett, 2d, Benoni Cutter, Thomas Farley, Enos Hardy, and Philip Wood. 14 have sustained the office of Magistrate in this town—Samuel Cummings, Sam'l Hobart, Sam'l Cummings 2d, Benjamin Whiting, Richard C. Shannon, Noah Worcester, Daniel Emerson, 2d, Benjamin Poole, Amos Eastman, William Ames, Benjamin M. Farley, Nathan Thayer, Joseph Greeley, and Benoni G. Cutter.—I have not been able to avail myself of any record, showing who have held commissions in the Military department of the town ; and must decline making a partial exhibit.

I have thus brought to view some of the principal incidents and facts in the history of this town for one Century from its commencement. The reminiscence of these things is suited to produce in us a melancholy pleasure. On the one hand, we recognize the superintending care of a beneficent Providence, and his abounding grace ! and on the other, when we look around for our Parents, and Grand Parents, we are reminded of the fleetness of time, and of the frailty of man ! How surprizing the change, which one hundred years have wrought in this town !—Suppose the first settler of this town, who lies in this burying ground, should arise from his bed of repose, and survey the country around him ; suppose he should enter

this house, and look around on this assembly, and could you persuade him that he stood upon the ground of *Nissitissit*? that these were the descendants of his adventurous companions, and that he was addressed by his Grand Child? He would be ready to exclaim—"all is impossible"! It would seem to him but yesterday, that he forded or swam the Nashua, and with his pack on his back, groped his passage through the dense underbrush, parting them with his hands to make him a way over this very spot, and looking cautiously on either hand for the lair of a beast, or the haunt of a Savage! And should his incredulity be finally overcome, with what devout admiration would he say—"Lord, thou makest all things new"! And who can estimate the labour, that was requisite to transform this wilderness into a fruitful field, as we behold it this day? Consider, every tree was to be felled, and if the stump was left to itself it was to be felled again in some ten, or twenty years. Roots and stumps, and Rocks were to be removed. Every rod of fence to be made over and over again. Every road to be worked in the same manner. Every bridge to be builded, every house, every barn, shed, shop and mill; every school-house, and meeting-house, and all implements of husbandry to be fabricated and kept in repair! All these things were done, and the beasts of prey and savage men were driven from these bounds, long before we, who are among the middle aged, can date our existence! and they were performed, too, in times of peril, and want, when our Mothers and Grand Mothers, left their Husbands and children, and rode to Andover, to Woburn and Chelmsford, to procure sustenance for their families, and returning, swam their horses over the Nashua in the stillness and darkness of night! These things, which may seem almost Apocryphal in the view of their descendants, were actually performed! And they were performed, because God had prepared that generation for the work he assigned to them. They were bold, hardy, energetic and persevering. The stateliest trees fell before the repeated blows of their axes, like windfalls before a tempest, and the brisk wheel hummed in their cabin the livelong day!

They were not only industrious, but they were frugal.—They brought their living within their means, and kept the great object of improvement in view. Says a correspondent, who can recollect distinctly somewhat more than 60 years, and whose situation was as eligible as most of his cotemporaries,* “I was a stout lad before I had any thing like a surtout, or a great coat, and I never owned a hat worth more than a dollar, or wore any kind of boots until I had a family.” He says concerning the article of food, “It was more thought of for my Parents to have Tea once a week for breakfast, than it now is for some families to have it three times a day. Spoon victuals was the principal support.”

It was about the year 1760, the first barrel of Rum was brought into the town. The rumour of its arrival was the cause of regret and alarm with the discerning and good people, and one Godly man† exclaimed, “If it has come to this, that a barrel of Rum is brought into this town, we are an undone people”! A prediction that has been verified, no doubt, in respect to hundreds of families, a sentence that is still worthy to be inscribed in letters of gold upon the posts of every man’s door, upon the doors of the Sanctuary, and upon the lids of every man’s Bible!

In respect to the means of instruction at that day, the same correspondent says—“I have no recollection of having been taught to read by any Female, unless it was my Mother or Grand Mother. I never heard a lesson given in English Grammar or Geography when I came into a Master’s School, and in respect to Books, if we except the *Bible*; the spelling book, the Psalter and the Primer, were more than scholars generally possessed.”—At this time, 1765, there was but one News paper printed in the State, The New-Hampshire Gazette, published at Portsmouth, and it is thought quite problematical, whether more than *four* of these were taken in the town. There were no periodicals except the Almanack. In 1770, there was neither Sleigh, Chaise, or Wagon of any description in the town, but the saddle and the pillion were

* Jesse Worcester, Esq.

† The uncle of the late Lieut. Solomon Wheat.

indispensables for conveyance to and from meeting during the summer, for those who did not walk ; and in the winter, oxen and sleds were frequently improved for this purpose.—Now in view of these things, and when I reflect that our ancestors sustained these privations and hardships in order to transmit to us, their descendants, a goodly inheritance, I feel inexpressibly indignant, when I hear the manners and customs of that generation made a subject for levity by those who are reaping the fruits of their industry and frugality.

It was not because they did not love their children that they did not give them modern advantages ; it was not because they did not know how to estimate modern conveniences for themselves, that they did not possess them ; but it was because they could not do these things without sacrificing the greater for the less ! They considered themselves as they actually were, the representatives of unborn generations ; they had a wilderness to subdue, a nation of Savages to drive back, and the freedom of their descendants to purchase with their blood, and with every shilling they could control ; and how improvident would they have been, had they let go of those momentous concerns, and attempted to elevate their children above their true condition, and the condition of their suffering Country ! I must confess, that when I consider how well they improved the means they did enjoy ; how well they understood their Bibles, and their primers ; how they estimated the rights of men ; with what religious reverence they regarded the Sabbath and the Sanctuary, and with what promptitude they discharged their duty to one another, and to their Country, I look back on them with admiration, and I declare my solemn conviction when I say—*The world never saw such a race of men but once !* And I am equally convinced, that the farther their descendants depart from the great and leading principles of their Ancestors, the greater will be their degeneracy, and the more speedy their ruin ! But I see that I am already anticipating the events of a second Century, events which the Providence of God alone can develop. And with me and you, it is a solemn moment. We are reminded, that we

are now the representatives of those who are to rise up after us in our line for a century to come, as our fathers were our representatives a hundred years ago. As we have been influenced by the part which our fathers performed, so will generations yet unborn be affected by the part we shall perform, and how immense are our responsibilities ! We do not move without the destinies of men devolving upon us ! We need, all of us, divine teaching and sanctification, to enable us to act wisely and faithfully, in these relations ! We need to be praying men and praying women, as our Fathers and Mothers were, and to realize that here we have no continuing city ! And while we stand by the ashes of our Parents and our Grand Parents ; while we recall their prayers, and tears, and labours for our salvation, Oh, let us not disappoint the hope, that alleviated their sorrows in death ! Although the tongue is silent, which poured instruction into our infant minds, and the arm has withered, which bore us to the baptismal fount, yet we may believe, their faith in the atoning blood of Christ is recorded on high, and we may hope, that blessings are in reserve for their repentant offspring, and for *all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call*. With such obligations resting on us, and such gracious promises left on record for us, and our children, let us improve the opportunity to secure the pearl of great price, that is put into our hands, and not lose the blessing by delay !

And can we be otherwise than deeply impressed with the brevity of human life, while we stand amidst so many mementos of departed worth, and the voice of our fathers and of our mothers speaks to us from the grave, "Sons and Daughters, the time is short"! Another century gone, and where are we ? Where are our *children* ? Who will stand in this place, and address that unknown, that distant generation ? Who shall open the book of Providence, and rehearse the events of another century ? Alas, we are then dead ! and our children are dead ; and but few of us will transmit our memories to that distant day, and where, Oh where our spirits ? But whoever he shall be, that shall speak on that solemn and affecting occasion,

to him would I now reach forth the right hand of fellowship, if he comes in the name of Jesus, and Oh, that it may be his delightful service to speak to an entire assembly of holy men and holy women, and to adopt the language of the seventh angel in the Apocalypse, by announcing that *the Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever!*

But I am unwilling to take my leave of this subject, and of this numerous audience, until I have fixed your thoughts on that future moment, when Centuries will cease to be numbered, and time to be measured. There is a lucid spot in the distant horizon of our hopes, and it is exhibited to us by the prospective part of God's holy word, a spot to which every eye of faith is naturally turned for the personal interest which it sees to centre there! It is the hour of judgment! Yes, we are taught by unerring truth, that nature will cease to revolve, the world will expire, and the dead, we, our ancestors, and our descendants, will awake into life, and stand before the effulgent throne of God! For it is the language of an Apostle—that *we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed!* But why this universal interest felt in the doctrine of the judgment? It is for the greatest of all reasons;—for it is again said—*We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* No wonder that the contrite in heart should contemplate these truths, with a triumphant hope of a blessed immortality! No wonder that the sinner should, in view of them, be filled with the deepest solicitude and dismay! How then, as an Ambassador for Christ, as one that cherishes a tender concern for your immortal interests, and as one should speak for the last time, *I pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God.*

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